



## Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage **TELESCOPE - MESSENGER**

United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio

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### **Mount Gretna Camp Meeting Centennial** by **Carl Y. Ehrhart**

By the power of your imagination, the reader is invited to reverse the flow of time to an evening in early August a century ago. You are standing in a clearing on the slope of a thickly wooded mountain in southern Lebanon County, Pennsylvania. You are surrounded by a sea of white canvas tents, the oil lamps within them gleaming hospitably in the dusk. Among them are small cottages, their lamps too casting a cherry glow. In the midst of the tranquility you are aware of rows of backless plank seats forming a rustic temple. The whole area is illuminated by large lanterns and torches. Their flickering light falls on crowds of earnest worshippers moving quietly among the rows of seats.

What is this you are witnessing in your mind's eye? Nothing other than the birth of the Mount Gretna Campmeeting Association's century of service to God, the Christian church, and the community of southcentral Pennsylvania. Disillusioned by the growing secularization of the campmeeting Bible conference at Stoverdale, a few miles southeast of Harrisburg, ministerial members of the United Brethren Church secured in the spring

of 1892 a tract of just over thirty acres from wealthy iron magnate and landowner Robert Coleman of Cornwall. After an amazingly brief and labored gestation period spent in planning, clearing the rugged terrain and building modest cottages, the birthing services were held at the new campmeeting site on Tuesday, August 2, 1892. Just five days later, on Sunday, August 7th, United Brethren Bishop Nicholas Castle dedicated the woodland chapel to the glory and worship of God.

The open-sided circular auditorium or tabernacle, which has through the years been both symbol and center of the Mount Gretna Bible Conference program was erected in 1899. It was designed and built by John Cilley, a local skilled carpenter and self-taught architectural engineer. Its conical roof rests on twenty-one chestnut

pillars, and its ingenious system of tied-in roof-support timbers provides seating with an unimpeded view for eight hundred persons.

Cilley also was the builder of a tabernacle of the same design at the Mount Lebanon Campmeeting site, several miles distant from Mount Gretna, as well as at several other places.



Down through the years Mount Gretna became the location of a number of activities and programs of the United Brethren churches of the East Pennsylvania Conference. Early on the campmeeting evangelistic program shifted to the educational emphasis of a Bible conference. This character it still maintains, both in name and in fact. A Summer Assembly program instituted in 1928, providing training in the fields of Christian education, youth work and Sunday school development, was succeeded in 1952 by an Age Group camping program. Many United Brethren churches and youth, campers and counsellors, became acquainted with Otterbein Lodge, arts and crafts, campfire services and dips in Lake Conewago. The names of such leaders as Schuyler Enck, David Young, I. Moyer Hershey, Ezra Ranck, Walter Deibler, Elmer Yoder and many others come quickly to mind.

With the establishment and development of a large camping area called Gretna Glen, a couple of miles east of Mounh Gretna, the summer Bible Conference has remained as the major religious activity of the Campmeeting Association. The 1992 Centennial Bible Conference, held the two weeks between July 26th and August 9th, was an outstanding celebration in every respect. It featured a Centennial pageant written by Bruce Souders, UTS '47, entitled "A Campmeeting Fly Remembers Mt. Gretna." Other outstanding presentations included a riveting dramatic solo performance of the Gospel of Luke by actor Bruce Kuhn and two special musical concerts, one by a massed children's choir, the other by a handbell choir drawn from six area churches.

Strong preaching was done by James Singer,

a Lutheran friend of long standing; retired United Methodist Bishop James Ault; Fred Day, young pulpiteer from the Poconos; and Peter Marshall. The musical glue holding all this together was supplied by the veteran team of Alden Biely, music director; Donald Zechman, organist; and Rodney Shearer and W. Richard Kohler, pianists.

A Mount Gretna Centennial Fund campaign initiated a year ago nears the attainment of its \$115,000 goal. The enthusiasm and interest generated by this effort augurs well for Mount Gretna's future. While the side of South Mountain no longer reveals a sea of white canvas tents and modest cottages, but rather a settled community of many year-around residences, the summer presentation of the Gospel in many forms, with its call to spiritual renewal, continues to serve the faith needs of those to whom it ministers. Mount Gretna looks forward to its second century with unabated faith and abundant hope.

»An excellent Mt. Gretna Campmeeting Centennial History in paperback has been written by Thomas Meridith and Edward Ohms. It can be secured from the former by addressing him at P.O. Box 625, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064. The cost is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling.«



### *A reader response*

In the "Archival News Notes" of the last issue, we wondered whether the *History of East Ohio Conference United Brethren in Christ* by Dr. B. S. Arnold was the history of Muskingum Conference to which Melvin Moody referred.

Dr. Keith Wagner, the grandson of Dr. Arnold, wrote to assure us that it was. He pointed out that the East Ohio conference history, published in 1966 was the only work of that type Dr. Arnold produced and the history of Muskingum Conference is the first chapter in the book.



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## Beginnings of United Brethren higher education by Lewis D. Bonebrake

»Dr. Bonebrake, an 1882 graduate of Otterbein University, was president of Indiana Central University from 1909 to 1915. Founded at Indianapolis in 1902, the university had enrolled its first students in 1905. During the 1908-1909 academic year, it had been without a president. Each year it was sinking more deeply into debt. In his 1912 Annual Report to the Board of Trustees, President Bonebrake attributed most of the problems that had plagued earlier United Brethren schools to inadequate planning; discussed Indiana Central's advantages over those earlier schools; and spoke frankly about what the Board and the United Brethren Church in Indiana had to do to ensure the ultimate success of Indiana Central. In doing these things he sketched the beginnings of United Brethren higher education. The following has been excerpted from that report and edited by Frederick D. Hill.«

Their study will have a good influence on us. The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, when it came to its intellectual awakening about 1840 to 1850 and felt the need of more education for its ministers and the laity, first gave expression to the impulses thus awakened by the establishment of Otterbein University at Westerville, Ohio, on April 26, 1847. There followed in quick succession the establishment of many other institutions—Westfield in Illinois, Western (now Leander Clark [later Westmar]) in Iowa, Lebanon Valley in Pennsylvania, Hartsville in Indiana, Philomath in Oregon, and many others of lesser or greater promise. The list is very long.

In Ohio alone there were Smithville Academy and Fostoria Academy outside of Otterbein University. In Indiana there were Roanoke Classical Seminary, Green Hill Seminary, North Manchester College, and two or three other attempts more or less ill-organized, outside of Hartsville College, not to speak of the school of our radical brethren [Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Old Constitution] at Huntington.

The row of grave stones in the college and seminary burying grounds of our United Brethren Church is very long, Avalon, Trenton, Lane, Buchannon, Roanoke, Hartsville, Green Hill, N. Manchester, Mt. Pleasant, Fostoria, Smithville, and others whose names do not come to me as I write these words. It is a long sad list.

Our church fathers awakened at the close of the dominance of the Mennonite ideas in the church and sought to find for themselves the pathway to the intellectual conceptions of Dr. Otterbein, the trained and scholarly first bishop of the denomination. As it were, they awoke from the dream that ministers need no special training to discover themselves educationally lost in the woods, and their impulses led them to seek some way out.

They took no time to set their compasses or get their bearings. They simply started somewhere. They knew their church would perish if they did not secure educational privileges for their young people and thus raise the standard of preaching of the denomination. They knew they must get out [of the woods] some how, but their leaders did not call them into council or make careful calculations. Neither time, place, curriculum, cost, or the question of strategic advantages of location were studied to any great extent.

There were no committees of research or commissions with large plenary power to go into matters in careful painstaking manner as befitted the laying of foundations of great permanent enterprises. There was no general policy adopted. Much that was done was haphazard and accidental. When the first school of the denomination was founded at Westerville, they bought from the Methodists an old academy known as the Blendon Young Men's Seminary and gave \$1300 for it. At that time Westerville was a very small cross roads village, 12 miles north of Columbus, Ohio, no local UB Church in the village, no UB communities any where near the institution to lend it local support. There was no railroad or other convenience of travel, and not a sidewalk in the whole town, and mud, mud was everywhere. When Hartsville College was located our fathers went out some 15 miles from

## ANNIVERSARIES—1993

April 1893

100th Anniversary of the founding of the first Old People's Home of the United Brethren Church at Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

April 1, 1903

90th Anniversary of the founding of an orphanage at Quincy, Pennsylvania, by the United Brethren Church.

April 1913

80th Anniversary of the merger of the Old People's Home with the orphanage at Quincy.

May 18, 1808

185th Anniversary of the death of Jacob Albright in Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania.

November 3, 1803

190th Anniversary of Albright's organization, known as the Evangelical Association but first known as "The newly formed Methodist Conference"; later as "Albright's People."

November 1968

25th Anniversary of the formation of the United Methodist Church at Dallas, Texas.

December 13, 1818

175th Anniversary of the death of John Walter, tilemaker apprentice to Jacob Albright and later pioneer Evangelical preacher.

—Cecil Potttiegier

Columbus, Indiana, to locate their school; Annville, Pennsylvania, where Lebanon Valley was located, was chosen away out from Lebanon, a splendid county seat town; and they overlooked Harrisburg, the state capital, and that school has always had a struggle. So was it with Westfield, Illinois—it takes a day to get in on the railroad and a day to get [out]—a very unlikely location for a great college. But why go through the long list? Other churches were making similar mistakes, to lesser degree perhaps, but mistakes

none-the-less.

The exception of all locations chosen for the building of a college is Indianapolis, the seat of Indiana Central University—the youngest school of the denomination and the most hopeful. This college when it gets 20 acres more of land will have the one location par excellence of the whole church. We have in our college the one ideal location for the awakening dream of the denomination—a dream often indulged in at Conferences and Conventions—a dream for one big central university. We are so situated that in time we can command large interests outside of the denomination as well as in it. At our very door is the metropolis of one of the richest and, educationally speaking, most wide awake states of the American Union. As for our constituency we have the second largest of the denomination—Otterbein only exceeding us. Our location is high, dry, healthy. We are of easy access. Ours is the ideal location for a big school, and it is right up to ourselves whether we win or lose.

I wish to say with emphasis that this school can be a great university in every sense of the word if the money is provided to make it so, and the one and only problem that confronts us is to get the money in quantities large enough and quick enough before we lose our opportunity and the chance passes forever.

It is said that fortune knocks once at the door of all of us; it is knocking right now at the door of this school; are we doing all we can, working all we can, giving all we can, and praying all we can for a great success?



## Gatherings

*We desire to report meetings which bring together persons to keep alive the Evangelical United Brethren heritage in United Methodism. Here are some recent gatherings.*

**Tomo Dachi.** Last August a group which has been



meeting since 1912\* met at the residence of **Dr. Norman and Wilma Klump** at Otterbein Home. The name "Tomo Dachi" is Japanese for "Friends" and the organization began as wives of general church officers of the United Brethren Church. After the Evangelical United Brethren merger it was correspondingly enlarged and later it included wives of United Theological Seminary professors. Following the EUB-Methodist union, the organization was again broadened to include wives of the newly arrived Dayton general staff. By the 1980s some office secretaries and missionaries were included and the spouses of members were invited to attend with their wives. The organization was entirely social and educational, though the name created mystery and even concern among non-members in the denomination until they learned of its real nature.

A high point in the organization's history was in the 1960s when Tomo Dachi met annually at the home of **Bishop J. Balmer and Mrs. Justina Showers** for their Christmass tea. The house was splendidly decorated for the season and Mrs. Showers always baked enough cookies to send samples with each guest.

At the recent August meeting **Dr. Donald Gorell** reported on the Louisville Consultation of European and American Methodists arranged by the EUB Heritage Center, and a number of persons from the Methodist tradition was also present.

The data for this report was provided by **Mrs. Darlene Chitwood**, the present chair, who would welcome information about the founding and early history of this EUB traditional group.

\*This is the earliest reference we can confirm.



**Former Atlantic Conference.** Robert Barnes reports that members of the former Atlantic Conference of the EUB Church have had an annual meeting shortly after Easter (April 30 in 1993) for more than a dozen years. When it began invitations were sent to all clergy who had served a church within the conference boundary or who held membership in the conference. Through the years **Carl Schneider, Henry Zehner, Bishop Wayne Clymer, Fred Brandauer, Virgil Megill**, their wives and others attended. Time has thinned the numbers but recently attendance has increased as people who were members of the churches joined the evening celebration.

## A new Macedonian call for help

Pastors and parishioners in Eastern Europe and Russia are pleading for our prayers and financial assistance as they respond to new opportunities to spread the Gospel to those so long denied spiritual truth. An insightful information pamphlet entitled "The New Europe and Methodism" is available just for the cost of handling—50 copies or less, \$1.58; 51-200, add \$2.50. Order from Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Financial support may be channeled through Advanced Special Office, Room 1316, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. Six Advance Specials are: Russian, no. 011510-1RA; Church Camp program in Proust, no. 011625-3RA; Church reclamation and repairs, no. 00517-6AN; Ministries to newly released prisoners in Prague, no. 011627-5DN; Prison ministry in Prague, no. 01626-4RA; Salary supplement for ministers and church workers, no. 008760-5RA. Lets keep these needs on our prayer and giving lists.

Arthur C. Core, Lebanon, Ohio

## IN MEMORY

**Ray and Marian Barbary** sent a clipping dated October 31, 1992 reporting the death on the previous day of **Dr. J. W. Kreckler**, the last editor of the original *Telescope-Messenger*. He was 93 and most recently had lived at the Twin Oaks Nursing Home, Campbelltown, Pennsylvania, where he was visited by this editor. While then having speech difficulty, his mind was clear as ever. He had been recognized by inclusion in the United Methodist Communications Hall of Fame. He is remembered with appreciation by all of those who wrote under his editorship.

In this recognition of one faithful servant of the Evangelical United Brethren tradition, invitation is extended to readers to provide information about other representatives whose lives should be remembered. Nor should such information be delayed until their earthly service is ended.

## Drury but not Dreary

by Millard J. Miller

A. W. Drury  
Born: March 2, 1851  
Graduated from Union Biblical  
Seminary: 1877  
Appointed professor: 1880—with  
J. P. Landis  
Retired: November 2, 1934  
Died: February 17, 1935

When I enrolled at Bonebrake in 1930, I was advised by some students not to take any courses taught by Professor A. W. Drury because he is so dreary. In spite of the warning I took two of his courses, Systematic Theology and United Brethren Church History. In both courses, using textbooks authored by the professor, I found his teaching delightful, especially the history course. I was a history major in college and had taught American History at Hershey High School for two years before coming to the seminary, so history, any history, was in my blood.

Dr. Drury had a sly sense of humor which a pupil might miss unless he was alert. He gave me A grades, so I feel an obligation to thank him publicly, but more importantly, to set the record straight about his teaching. Dr. Drury was not dreary to me. He rightly deserves the honor of being a member of the "Four Horsemen" of the seminary—Funkhouser, Fout, Landis and Drury.

When I took the history course in the 1932/33 year, Dr. Drury had been teaching at the seminary for fifty-four years and was then eighty-two years old. It was perhaps the last time he taught the course. I can still see him sitting at his table with his long legs wrapped around each other in corkscrew fashion. He literally walked us all the way through his 832 page *History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ*. I still have my cherished and autographed copy with many of his quotes written along the margins.

In spite of his age, Dr. Drury always seemed to be in a hurry as he walked to his classroom. Yet he would take the time to chat with students. During my years at the seminary he lived in the dormitory with us. One night my wife and I were walking past his room when we noticed that his brow was bloody with a scratch he had received from a wooden box of books. He explained that he was searching for a particular book which he never found and was obviously quite agitated. We plastered his scratched brow with a bit of iodine and a band aid. The next day on my way to classes I met him. With a smile of victory, he said, "I found that book last night, and where do you suppose I found it?" Of course I did not know, and he quickly explained, "I found it the last place I looked."

For many years Dr. Drury was the church historian and secretary of the Historical Society. In his classroom was a collection of historical documents and archival material, systematically arranged and labeled, and safely locked in cases and drawers. After unlocking them he described the items, placed them back where they were and turned the keys. As he did so he explained with his usual twinkle, "I know that all of you are honest and I intend to keep you that way."

At the beginning of one of Dr. Drury's courses he said to the class, "To get along in this world you need spirituality, education and common sense. You get spirituality from God, your education from man, but if you don't have common sense neither God nor man can do anything for you."

One of his favorite illustrations in his theology class was the story of the person who was seen beating his dog after it was dead. "Why are you beating that dog when it is already dead?" a bystander asked. "I want to prove that there can be punishment after death."

At the close of my senior year, Dr. Drury learned that I would be appointed pastor of the college church and teacher of Bible at Shenandoah College, Dayton, Virginia. He informed me that a member of my new church, Mrs. A. S. Hammack, had a pewter communion cup used by William Otterbein. "I want you to get that

cup for our archives as your first assignment." He told me Mrs. Hammack's husband, a former conference superintendent of the Virginia Conference, was at the time deceased. (Incidentally, Hammack baptized me as a twelve year old lad.)

When I reached Dayton one of my first visits was to see Mrs. Hammack. She showed me the cup but was not interested in parting with it. For my first communion service in the church I asked her to let me place the cup on the table as a symbolic presence of Father Otterbein. This pleased her very much and was the first time most of the church members knew about the cup. It was indeed the center of much interest. I am pleased to say that before the first year ended the cup was in the hands of Dr. Drury. And soon thereafter Mrs. Hammack was in her grave.

Long and difficult days of litigation followed the split in our church in 1889. With tears in his eyes, Dr. Drury told of the long hours and days he had to spend on the witness stand as an expert witness in court rooms across our church. He proudly added that "we never lost any property to the dissident group."

Unfortunately years later, I had to spend the better part of three days on the witness stand in a county court room. One of the churches under my supervision as a superintendent tried to withdraw and take the church property as a result of our last union with the Methodist Church. Without that course under Dr. Drury I could not have come through successfully. His teaching had come full circle.

When I was a student at the seminary Dr. Drury was also the librarian. On one hot summer day he was working in the old library room upstairs in the administration building. With his brow wet with sweat and his hands black he said, "The chief quality of a Bonebrake librarian is to be willing to work for nothing and willing to be regarded as half crazy." He was working during the depression when money was very scarce.



## About this issue

Dr. Carl Y. Ehrhart, a long-time member of UTS Board of Trustees, is an ordained United Methodist pastor, Professor Emeritus and Dean Emeritus of Lebanon Valley College and Chairman of the Mt. Gretna Bible Conference Program Committee and Centennial Fund.

Frederick D. Hill is professor emeritus of history at the University of Indianapolis, formerly Indiana Central University. He now is affiliated with the university as historian and assistant archivist.

Millard J. Miller, a regular contributor to T-M, resides at Otterbein Home, Lebanon, Ohio.

Harry J. Fisher is a minister of the Western Pennsylvania Conference now living in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Prior to his retirement in 1973 he served both as a pastor and a district superintendent in the conference.

## Archival News Notes

◆ **Carlton Young**, formerly an editor for the United Methodist Publishing House, has recently made extensive use of United Brethren, Evangelical and EUB hymnals in UTS's archival and rare book collections in his preparation of the *Companion to the United Hymnal* to be published this spring. He describes this work as an attempt "to trace the hymns in our current hymnal to their first appearance in Methodist and EUB collections."

◆ Although many of Bishop **Milton Wright's** personal papers and diaries are kept at the Dunbar Library at Wright State University (together with papers of his sons, Orville and Wilbur), the UTS library holds five reels of microfilm of his diaries for the years 1857-1917. These will from time to time prove useful to researchers in the history of the UB Church.

Paul Schrodt

## Anecdote

### A memory of Dr. Josiah P. Landis

Harry J. Fisher entered the Diploma Class at Bonebrake in 1929. Later, after college and a pastorate, he earned his B.D. degree in 1937. During this diploma school time he had both Dr. A. W. Drury and Dr. J. P. Landis as teachers he remembered all his years. Now in his 82nd year, this is what he remembers of Dr. Landis.

"Dr. Landis was a soldier of the Civil War and came out of the war an atheist. He enrolled in Otterbein College and during his first year a great revival took place in Westerville. Students and friends invited him to attend. In that revival he was soundly converted and lived for Christ all his days. He graphically told about his conversion in one of his classes, and it was worth attending that whole term to hear his testimony of how Christ changed his life.

"I would often see this white-haired saint walk the halls of Bonebrake communing with his Lord. His face shone, and he always had his magnifying glass at hand if he wanted to read. He was in his eighties when he taught this Bible class."



### A missionary's education

When Charles W. Shoop was a young missionary to China, he was assigned maintenance chores by the senior missionary. So on one occasion he was told to have the Chinese contractor clean the chimney of the mission building. He was further told that this was to be done by wrapping a cloth around a bamboo pole and pushing it down the chimney from the top.

When Shoop told Tam Kai, the contractor, what and how he must do it, Tam took Shoop outside, pointed to the chimney and said in Chinese, "Look!" The chimney had a cap on it that prevented any bamboo pole from ever being used to clean it. So Shoop let Tam Kai do it his own way, which was to put cloth around a chain and drop it down the chimney.

The experience taught him, Dr. Shoop told the young missionary to whom he was mentor, that often it is best to let the Chinese do things their way rather than to insist on their doing it his way. Such was the early education of a great missionary.

*The Editor invites YOU to submit material relating to the Evangelical, United Brethren or Evangelical United Brethren traditions which he will consider for publication in the T-M as space permits.*

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